



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St. Paul District

Information Paper

Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock Closure, Upper Mississippi River



Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

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Description

Non-native bighead and silver carp (Asian carp) continue to be species of concern in the watersheds of the Upper Mississippi River. These invasive species can grow and reproduce rapidly in riverine environments, potentially outcompeting native fish species for food. Both species are common in the lower reaches of the Mississippi River but have established populations only as far north as Pool 17 in southeastern Iowa. Although no established populations of bighead or silver carp are known to be in Minnesota waters, individual specimens have been captured as far upstream as Pool 2 above Hastings, Minnesota. These individual specimen catches and evidence of the impacts on the Illinois River have heightened the concern over the spread of these invasive species and their potential adverse impacts to northern aquatic ecosystems and the related fishing and boating economy.

As a measure to prevent upstream passage of Asian carp, Section 2010 of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA) directs:

(a) DEFINITION OF UPPER ST. ANTHONY FALLS LOCK AND DAM. - In this section, the term "Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam" means the lock and dam located on Mississippi River Mile 853.9 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

(b) MANDATORY CLOSURE. - Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall close the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam.

(c) EMERGENCY OPERATIONS. - Nothing in this section prevents the Secretary from carrying out emergency lock operations necessary to mitigate flood damage."

The Act was signed into law on June 10, 2014.

Status

The St. Paul District is awaiting higher authority Corps of Engineers implementation guidance on the closure directive. To be determined is whether navigation will end with the 2014 navigation season (typically at the end of November), or if the navigation will be open for a short time in the spring of 2015. The Corps is working to affect an efficient end of navigational services at the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam.

The Corps anticipates that the level of service at the other two Minneapolis locks, Lower St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam and Lock and Dam 1, will change since commercial towboats will no longer have an accessible commercial terminal destination upstream of these locks. Hours of operation, as well as staffing levels at these locks will be reduced commensurate with the estimated lower level of use. Usage is expected to be limited to excursion boats and private recreational craft.

Changes to the level of service at these locks, as well as closure of Upper St. Anthony Falls, will be announced in the Federal Register. Comments will be considered in determining the closure date and levels of service.

Authority

Section 2010 of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA).